THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (e) Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2006 facilitated by Pratham, an NGO does not provide the data for drop out rates. However, as per the data available with the Ministry, dropout rates in Classes I-V (age group 6-11 years) has come down from 31.5% in 2003-04 to 29.0% in 2004-05. In Andhra Pradesh, drop-out rates in Classes I-V has come down from 42.6% in 2003-04 to 31.9% in 2004-05. During 2004-05, drop out rates in Classes I-V, was less than the national average in 10 States and 7 UTs, namely, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, A & N Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry.

Minister's Quota in admission to Kendriya Vidyalayas

†1365. SHRI MAHENDRA SAHNI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the prescribed norms have been ignored in nomination of 1,200 students in the Kendriya Vidyalayas from Minister's quota;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Employment oriented education system

†1366. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to accord importance to employment oriented system keeping in view the needs of changing the present education system as per changing scenario;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, in what way Government propose to change the present education system alongwith the outline thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) (to (c) The Government has always accorded importance to employment oriented system of education. While elaborating on essence and role of Education, the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 has recognized that Education develops manpower for different levels of the Economy.

The NPE 1986 also envisages the introduction of systematic, well-planned and rigorously implemented programmes of vocational education. These elements are meant to develop a healthy attitude amongst students towards work and life, to enhance individual employability, to reduce the mis-match between the demand and supply of skilled manpower, and to provide and alternative for those intending to pursue higher education without particular interest or purpose. The policy envisages that efforts will be made to provide children at the higher secondary level with generic vocational courses which cut across several occupational fields and which are not occupation specific.

The National Policy on Education also envisages the delinking of degrees from jobs in selected areas. Delinking is to be applied in services for which university degree need not be a necessary qualification.

However, Government is not in favour of excessive emphasis on skills, employment and corporate oriented education at the cost of Basic Sciences and Humanities which is fundamental to our all round development, material and spiritual.

Criteria for literacy

†1367. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pelased to state:

(a) whether mere knowledge of alphabets has been recognized as criteria in the Constitution for terming someone as literate;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.